

**City of Belmont
PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF MARCH 1, 2017
One Twin Pines Lane, City Council Chambers**

CALLED TO ORDER AT 7:05 PM

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Vargas, Foehr, Block, Bortoli, Sebti, and Mittelstadt;
Commissioner Michaels arrived shortly after roll call.

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Fine and Sullivan

STAFF PRESENT: Parks and Recreation Director Gervais and Administrative
Assistant Saggau

COMMUNITY FORUM

Laurie Davidson requested that the Tai Chi class and the instructor Elliotte Mae be brought back to the City. She asked that there be a detailed report on why the contract was not renewed.

Emily Ingrao spoke in favor of renewing the contract with the Tai Chi instructor and requested more information on why that did not happen.

Isabella Ingrao commented on the importance of the Tai Chi class to the students and requested there be reconsideration on bringing the class back.

Chair Vargas noted staff did provide an update to the Commission and is working on being able to offer a Tai Chi class in the fall. Parks and Recreation Director Gervais explained there was a contract dispute with the instructor but the City staff is working on providing a Tai Chi class to the community with a different instructor.

Chair Vargas left briefly and handed the meeting to Vice Chair Foehr.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/AGENDA AMENDMENTS

Commissioner Michaels noted he would attend the CPRS (California Parks & Recreation Society) conference.

Parks and Recreation Director Gervais announced Opening Night for the Youth Softball Association and Opening Day for Little League.

Parks and Recreation Director Gervais introduced newly appointed Parks and Recreation Commissioners Nicki Fox and Chuck Cotten that were in the audience.

CONSENT CALENDAR

February 1, 2017 Minutes

ACTION: On a motion by Commissioner Bortoli, seconded by Commissioner Block the minutes were approved. Vote 5 Commissioners and 1 Youth Commissioner in favor. (Chair Vargas, Commissioner Sullivan and Youth Commissioner Fine absent)

Chair Vargas returned to the meeting.

ITEMS OF BUSINESS

Update on the Activities of the Ad Hoc Dog Management Committee including Findings to Date, Preliminary Options and Next Steps

Parks and Recreation Director Gervais reviewed the background on this topic and requests for off-leash dog use of the fields at the Barrett Community Center and concerns expressed by youth sports organizations. He noted the Parks and Recreation Commission reviewed this item in 2011 and in 2016 but was unable to reach a consensus and the status quo remained. The City Council gave direction to resolve this issue and develop options for consideration so the Ad Hoc Dog Management Committee was formed.

Parks and Recreation Director Gervais reviewed the progress of the Ad Hoc Dog Management Committee and the criteria they developed to consider pros and cons of options. Four options the Committee developed were reviewed:

- 1) No Action/Status Quo
- 2) New Dog Exercise Area at Barrett
- 3) Adaptable Dog Exercise Areas at Barrett
- 4) Shared Field Use (Season and Time of Day)

The Committee did preliminary scoring of the options and the results were included in Attachment C of the Staff Report with Option 1 ranking highest and Option 4 ranking second.

Ad Hoc Dog Management Committee member Michaels noted that the Committee met with Police and Parks Maintenance staff to get their viewpoints. He added that San Mateo County is also looking at dog use in their parks and Committee members attended some of those meetings.

Commissioners provided their input and recommendations:

- Cipriani Dog Park lighting needs to be considered when working on the Ordinance
- Revised Ordinance should state “as posted” to provide flexibility for changes
- Consider how to inform field users when fields are closed
- Improve communication with My Belmont App
- Pilot programs are a way to try out options but should have a timeline and ways to measure success

- Consider location of fence line and gates; maybe allow dog owners access to area that will have shade structures in the future
- Safety is first priority
- Shared use of the field needs to be simple to understand
- Dog feces and the hygiene aspect should also be considered
- Barrett is the focus but consider other sites
- Use creativity to come up with other ideas and activities for dog owner
- Rent temporary fences to try out options
- Communication essential with shared field use
- Enforcement plan need
- Try to get more exact number of dog owners in Belmont

Chair Vargas noted through Commission discussion it appeared Option 3 had the lowest priority, Option 4 had the highest priority but Option 2 should still be considered. It was requested the Committee fine tune their ratings on the four options, provide options for shared use and reach out to the community for their input on this issue.

Sergio Raddavero with AYSO thanked the Commission and staff for taking this issue up.

Paul Sheng suggested using a device with red and green lights to show when dogs are allowed on the field.

Chair Vargas noted newly appointed Youth Commissioner Andres Raddavero was in the audience.

Consideration of a Bicycle Pump Track in Belmont

Parks and Recreation Director Gervais noted after hearing requests from the public the Commission requested bicycle pump tracks be put on the agenda. He explained what a bicycle pump track is and presented diagrams and photos of examples. Costs and maintenance needs were reviewed. Two potential locations in the open space areas were provided – one at the end of Carlmont Drive in Hidden Canyon Park; the other near the John Brooks Trail down from the Hallmark entrance into Water Dog Lake area.

Parks and Recreation Director Gervais noted this type of project could be completed with the assistance of volunteers. Pros and cons were reviewed. He explained this project is not included in any city plan so it would require City Council approval to move forward. He noted that liability concerns would need to be explored. He explained if the Commission would like to move forward with this it would be helpful to have an advocacy group participate in promoting it.

Parks and Recreation Director Gervais responded to Commission questions.

Sofie Sunwoo spoke in favor of a bicycle pump track.

Ehren Sheng spoke in favor of a bicycle pump track.

Matt Leonard stated it is difficult for children to ride bicycles on the trails and questioned if liability on a pump track would be different than on trails. He noted this would provide an opportunity for a community of volunteers and a place for kids to hangout.

Tom Switzer – Spoke in favor of pump tracks to provide a safe place for kids.

Kevin Sinarle – spoke in favor of a pump track noting there are not many flat areas for kids to ride bikes in Belmont.

Steve Sunwoo – spoke in favor of a pump track to provide an opportunity for family experience and said he would like to participate as a volunteer.

Aaron Faupell – spoke in favor of a pump track to provide a healthy activity for all ages. He said he would contribute as a volunteer and urged the Commission to move this project forward.

Paul Sheng – stated he was an attorney and provided his viewpoint on liability concerns. He also provided copies of documents regarding pump tracks including a staff report from the City of Lafayette, a list of risk management suggestions, Santa Cruz’s safety requirements and Cal Gov Code 831.7

There was Commission consensus that Hidden Canyon Park would be the better choice of the two proposed locations. Commissioners provided additional comments and suggestions:

- Check if there are grant opportunities
- In favor of volunteer approach
- Could stand alone outside city priorities
- Research liability
- Provides unstructured activities for youth
- Provides volunteer opportunity
- Offers family oriented activity
- Cost is low
- Benefit for community
- Unique feature for Belmont
- Provides diversity in recreation
- Uses natural resources
- Put in Master Plan
- Outreach to neighborhood for input
- Explore different location options

It was decided to bring this item back to the Commission after further research is completed.

OTHER BUSINESS / UPDATES

Department Reports

Parks and Recreation Director Gervais reported on the following:

- Tai Chi Class and communication with staff
- Davey Glen Park progress
- Youth Advisory Committee (YAC) to be on Council agenda
- Priorities to be included in the Minutes
- Fire Safe Crews Work

Parks and Recreation Director Gervais expressed appreciation to the Commission and recognized each Commissioner for their individual talent that they bring to the Commission.

Future Agenda Items

Commission Reorganization
 Dog Management Ad-Hoc Committee
 Ropes Course behind Ralston School
 Update on Davey Glen
 Solar Projects
 Bicycle Pump Track

Council and Commission Top Priorities

- Athletic Field Improvements
- Barrett Community Center Master Plan

Council Other Priorities that include Parks and Recreation

- Veterans Memorial
- Twin Pines Park Master Plan
- Tree Ordinance Update
- Resolve the Dog Issue at Barrett
- ADA Transition Plan
- Citywide Volunteer Program

Commission Other Priorities

- Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan
- Dogs in Parks Policy
- Department Resources and Budget
- Open Space Maintenance and Management

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:50 p.m.

Jonathan Gervais
 Parks and Recreation Director